

Message Text

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20

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 OMB-01 RSR-01 CU-04 /115 W

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R 160644Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6814

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L FORT LAMY 1149

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT CD

SUBJ: PRESIDENT TOMBALBAYE'S ANTI-FRENCH CAMPAIGN

REF: FORT LAMY 1086

1. PRESIDENT TOMBALBAYE'S ANTI-FRENCH CAMPAIGN REACHED WHAT APPEARED TO BE A PEAK WITH MASS RALLY ON JULY 7 IN FORT LAMY'S MAIN SQUARE AND MARCH TO OCAM VILLAGE (NOW BEING CALLED "PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE" OR "CHADIAN VILLAGE" SINCE WITHDRAWAL FROM OCAM). ADVANCE BILLING FOR RALLY AND MARCH WOULD HAVE MADE IT MOST IMPRESSIVE DEMONSTRATION OF POPULAR FEELING IN RECENT YEARS. EMOTIONS HAD BEEN FANNED BY STRIDENT EDITORIALS AND
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OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS OF ATTEMPTED FRENCH INTERVENTION IN

CHADIAN AFFAIRS, INCLUDING PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT THAT FRENCH HAD SET DECEMBER 31, 1973 AS TOMBALBAYE'S FINAL DAY OF POWER. PRE-RALLY TENSIONS IN COMMUNITY WERE HEIGHTENED BY PUBLIC INVITATION FOR CHADIANS TO APPEAR CARRYING TRADITIONAL ARMS, INCLUDING BOWS AND ARROWS, SPEARS AND KNIVES. BECAUSE ANTI-FRENCH CAMPAIGN KEPT SPILLING OVER INTO BLACK VS WHITE CONTEXT, CERTAIN AMOUNT OF APPREHENSION RAN THROUGHOUT NON-AFRICAN COMMUNITY IN FORT LAMY.

2. RALLY AND MARCH PROVED ANTI-CLIMACTIC. WE ESTIMATE ATTENDANCE AT NOT MORE THAN SEVEN THOUSAND. NON-CHADIAN AFRICANS STAYED AWAY EN MASSE: NO AFRICAN AMBASSADORS ATTENDED IN SPITE OF SPECIFIC INVITATION ALL AFRICANS AND EXCLUSION ALL WHITES. INSTEAD OF FIERY SPEECH EXPECTED, PRESIDENT DELIVERED TWO-SENTENCE DECLARATION CALLING FOR DIGNIFIED CONDUCT BY RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE TO PROTEST FRENCH MEDDLING IN CHADIAN AFFAIRS. HE THEN LED THE CROWD, WHICH INCLUDED MOST MEMBERS OF CHADIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL BUREAU, ON TWO-MILE MARCH FROM INDEPENDENCE SQUARE TO THE RESIDENCE. THE CROWD ITSELF MAINTAINED FESTIVE AIR REMINDING OBSERVERS OF MARDI GRAS PARADE. HEAVY SECURITY FORCES ACCOMPANIED MARCHERE.

3. NOW APPEARS THAT AT LEAST ONE OF REASONS RALLY AND MARCH SPUTTERED OUT WAS THAT FRENCH AMBASSADOR HAD MADE STRONG DEMARCHE TO PRESIDENT. IT MUST ALSO HAVE BEEN EVIDENT TO GOC FROM MANY INQUIRIES BY DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS CONCERNING SECURITY OF CHANCERIES AND FOREIGN NATIONALS THAT PROSPECT OF ARMED CHADIANS MARCHING THROUGH STREETS AFTER ATTENDING EMOTIONAL RALLY WAS VERY DISTURBING. IT MAY ALSO BE THAT GOVERNMENT ITSELF HAD MISGIVINGS ABOUT WISDOM THIS MOVE IN VIEW OF EMOTIONS WHICH HAD BEEN AROUSED BY FORCED RETURN OF STUDENTS FROM FRANCE AND BELGIUM AND CERTAIN AMOUNT OF DISCONTENT FOLLOWING ARREST GENERAL MALLOUM. FOR WHATEVER THE REASON, ON EVE OF RALLY RADIO REPEATED EVERY FEW MINUTES THAT THERE HAD BEEN MISUNDERSTANDING AND THAT NO TRUE PATRIOTIC CHADIAN WOULD THINK OF APPEARING AT RALLY WITH ANY ARMS WHATSOEVER, INCLUDING BOWS AND ARROWS, SPEARS OR KNIVES.

4. WHAT APPEARED TO BE JUST ANOTHER ESCALATION IN THE ANTI-FRENCH CAMPAIGN NOW HAS ASPECT OF ANI-CLIMAX. FOR TWO DAYS THERE HAVE BEEN NO MORE VIRULENT EDITORIALS OR DENUCIATIONS FROM EITHER PRESS
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OR RADIO, AND FIZZLING OUT OF RALLY AND MARCH, WHICH WERE ALL OVER WITHIN TWO HOURS, HAS REASSURED RESIDENT FRENCH COMMUNITY. WE CANNOT DISCOUNT, HOWEVER, POSSIBILITY THAT TOMBALBAYE REALLY INTENDS TO MAKE MAJOR CHANGE IN CHAD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH FRANCE. WE SEE IN HIS OVERTURES TO ARABS AND HIS REDIRECTING CHAD TOWARD THIRD-WORLD COUNTRIES A SEARCH FOR ASSISTANCE TO REPLACE THAT PROVIDED BY FRANCE. ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT TOMBALBAYE IS USUALLY PRAGMATIC AND CAREFUL, HE SOMETIMES APPEARS TO BELIEVE IN

ILLUSIONS, MANY OF WHICH ARE PROVIDED TO HIM BY NUMBER OF
SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL "COUNSELORS" SOME OF HIS COUNSELORS
HAVE PROMISED TO OBTAIN LARGE LOANS OR HEAVY FOREIGN INVESTMENT,
BUT THOSE SCHEMES WHICH WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT WHICH HAVE
INVOLVED UNITED STATES HAVE ALL PROVED TO BE WITHOUT MERIT.
PRESIDENT SEEMS TO BE RELYING MORE HEAVILY ON THESE COUNSELORS
IN HIS RUNNING BATTLE WITH FRANCE THAN EVER BEFORE. WE DO NOT
RULE OUT POSSIBILITY THAT PRESIDENT MAY UNILATERALLY RESHAPE HIS
RELATIONS WITH FRANCE IN HOPE THAT SOME OF HIS COUNSELORS OR THAT
HIS NEW DIRECTIONS IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS MAY PROVIDE HIM ALL THE
RESOURCES HE NEEDS TO SUBSTITUTE FOR THOSE OFFERED BY FRANCE.
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